

REMARKS / ARGUMENTS

In response to the Final Office Action mailed April 19, 2006 ("Office Action"), Applicants respectfully request that the Office enter the amendments set forth above and consider the following remarks. By this response, claims 44-49, 51, and 54-63 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer, and claims 50, 52, and 53 have been amended. Thus, after entry of this paper claims 50, 52, and 53 will remain pending in this application.

In the Office Action, the Examiner: (i) rejected claims 44-49 and 54-63 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(a) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,692,047 to McManis ("McManis"); (ii) rejected claim 51 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over McManis; and (iii) indicated that claims 50, 52 and 53 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Rejection of Claims 44-49 and 54-63 Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(a)

Claims 44-49 and 54-63 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(a) as being anticipated by McManis. Although Applicants respectfully disagree with the Examiner's rejection, in the interest of expediting prosecution of the remaining claims, Applicants hereby cancel claims 44-49 and 54-63 without prejudice and reserve the right to pursue those claims in a continuing application. Based upon the foregoing, Applicants respectfully submit that the instant rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102(a) are now moot.

Rejection of Claim 51 Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claim 51 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over McManis. Although Applicants respectfully disagree with the Examiner's rejection, in the interest of expediting prosecution, Applicants hereby cancel claim 51 without prejudice and reserve the right to pursue this claim in a continuing application. Based upon the foregoing, Applicants respectfully submit that the instant rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) is now moot.

Allowable Subject Matter


The Examiner indicated that claims 50, 52 and 53 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Applicants have hereby rewritten claims 50, 52, and 53 in the manner indicated by the Examiner, and thus respectfully request reconsideration of this application and timely allowance of the pending claims.

Please grant any extensions of time required to enter this response and charge any additional required fees to our Deposit Account 06-0916.

Respectfully submitted,

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